

教學、關懷、成長 — 專訪 中文系劉燕萍教授

Teaching, caring and growth — an interview with Prof Lau Yin-ping of Department of Chinese



劉教授 (前排左二) 及學生。
Prof Lau (front row, 2nd left) and her students.

劉燕萍教授曾三度獲頒大學優異教學獎並曾取得優秀教學證書獎，成為嶺大首位榮獲「教學終身成就獎」的教員。她認為，向學生傳授學問之際，更應着重對品格和精神的栽培，實踐「以生命影響生命」的博雅精神。

教學育人的抱負

自 1994 年加入嶺大 (前「嶺南學院」) 至今，劉燕萍教授曾任文學院院長及協理副校長 (學生事務)，但最享受的始終是教學。

她回憶當初加入嶺大，是緣於對教育的熱誠和對青年人的關懷。早年移居加拿大，曾從事其他工作，然而清楚感到教育才是真正的抱負。劉教授對當時有不少香港學生輕生深感痛惜，觸動了投身教育的使命感。1993 年回流香港後，即在香港大學攻讀博士課程，並在機緣下加入嶺南，廿二年來心繫嶺大學生。

方法與心靈並重

劉教授的課程包括中國古典文學史、古典小說、神話與文學、元曲等。她在課堂上談笑風生，與學生互動交流，以「方法教學」與「心靈教學」引導學生思考。劉教授時刻思考改進課堂設計，從教學用的電腦簡報、讀本、論文，到講課的眼神、聲線和語速，都準備得一絲不苟。

劉教授認為只有啟迪學習興趣，授課時既解惑又製造疑惑，鼓勵學生多方思考問題，成為自己的老師，才是長遠有效的教學。只側重於「方法教學」容易令學生與文本割裂，視作品為應付考核的材料，之後便拋諸腦後。惟有以「心靈教學」誘導學生用心閱讀，與作者「心心相印」，才能有效掌握理性分析的知識，將前人的智慧融入生命實踐中。

In her career at Lingnan, Prof Grace Lau Yin-ping has received a Certificate of Merit for Teaching and the Teaching Excellence Award no less than three times. She is also the first recipient of the Master Teacher Award at Lingnan. According to Prof Lau, when imparting knowledge to students, it is important to cultivate their character and moral values, with a view to practicing the liberal arts ethos of "inspiring lives with lives".

Aspiring to teach and nurture

Since joining Lingnan University (formerly Lingnan College) in 1994, Prof Lau has served as Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Associate Vice President (Student Affairs), but what she enjoys most is teaching.

Prof Lau emigrated to Canada at a young age and had worked in other fields before realising that her true aspiration is in education. She recalled that she joined Lingnan primarily because of her passion for teaching and concern for young people. She was deeply saddened at the time to see numerous cases of Hong Kong students committing suicide, which triggered her sense of mission to take up teaching. When she returned to Hong Kong in 1993, she immediately enrolled in a doctoral programme at The University of Hong Kong. She joined Lingnan by chance, and teaching and nurturing Lingnan students have since been the focus of her attention for the past 22 years.

Dual implementation of pedagogy and soul cultivation in teaching

Prof Lau has taught courses in history of Chinese classical literature, classical fiction, mythology and literature, and Yuanqu. She teaches with wit and humour in class, interacting with students and employing the dual concept of "pedagogy teaching" and "soul cultivation" to inspire their learning. Prof Lau is conscientious and meticulous in preparing for her class design, from powerpoint files, careful choice of textbooks and essays, to nonverbal skills including eye contact, voice projection and pace of delivery.

Prof Lau believes that effective teaching would motivate and inspire students to learn. The classroom is the arena for teachers to enlighten and challenge students intellectually. Students should be encouraged to exercise their critical thinking and become their own teachers. If we focus too much on pedagogical approach, students would be alienated from the real meaning and value of the text and merely consider it as material for assessment purposes that would be quickly forgotten afterwards. The complementing approach of soul cultivation, however, induces students to read the text closely with deeper appreciation. Students would then be

所以她選擇教授文本時，除衡量藝術價值外，更會考慮作品傳達的哲學思想對學生的啟發。

難忘的師生緣份

多年來，劉教授擁有很多珍貴的師生回憶。印象最深刻的是一位患有罕見疾病、行動不便、依靠呼吸機維持生命的學生。三年的大學生活本來已是艱辛的挑戰，他更需要時常進出醫院接受治療。他不良於行，輪椅無法穿梭圖書館的書架，又因呼吸機的關係令說話困難。但他沒有氣餒或放棄自己，反而加倍努力，雖然得到校方豁免，他仍堅持完成導修課上所要求的口頭報告。他能夠如期以不錯的成績畢業，實在讓人感動。

劉教授回憶當初錄取這個學生，除了欣賞他求學的熱忱，亦希望透過他不屈不撓的精神，對其他學生產生正面影響。與其說是自己給予這個學生機會，不如說是這學生給予嶺大師生一個見證逆境自強的寶貴經驗。該學生後來在嶺大完成碩士課程，畢業後經歷過求職困難的日子，劉教授便鼓勵他將心路歷程書寫出來。著作出版後，他將所有版稅捐予中文系，設立獎學金回饋母校。他的成就既體現個人努力，更反映教育對全人成長的重要性，以及「以生命影響生命」的博雅精神。

當然，並非每個學生都有在逆境中自強不息的毅力。也許身為母親以及曾任教中學的經驗，令劉教授更能諒解學生在生活上面對的困難與不安。她坦言未能關心所有學生，只希望盡力幫助有需要的同學。即使大學的教學、研究及行政工作繁重，她都樂意成為學生傾訴心事的對象，亦會主動關心他們。有時學生也會報以讓人窩心的舉措，例如他們旅遊期間寄來明信片或小擺設。她在「古典小說」課上講授傳奇《柳毅傳書》，有學生其後遊覽洞庭湖時拍攝與故事有關的場景、主角柳毅和龍女的塑像照片給她作備課之用。物輕情意重，代表嶺南師生關係親厚的博雅精神。劉教授珍惜每一段師生緣份。

回首多年在嶺大的教學生活，劉教授感恩地謙稱自己是幸運的。在她身上，我們看到一位靈活的學者，更看到一位醉心學問、誨人不倦的老師。「教學相長」，理當如是。

drawn much closer to the authors. This has shown to be effective in critically learning from the wisdom of the past masters and practicing it in life. In her selection of class materials, Prof Lau takes into consideration not only the artistic value but also the messages they convey to students.

Memorable teacher-student rapport

Over the years, Prof Lau has treasured numerous precious memories with students. She remembered most vividly a mobility-challenged student who suffered from a rare disease and had to rely on a ventilator to sustain life. The three years of university life alone was a challenge, and he often had to move in and out of hospital for treatment. He could neither walk nor move between bookshelves in the library in his wheelchair. He also had difficulty speaking because of his ventilator. Nevertheless, he didn't feel disheartened or wanted to give up. He worked even harder and insisted on completing the oral report for his tutorial class, although he was in fact given exemption from the department. It was an immeasurably huge and touching accomplishment when he finally graduated on schedule with good results.

Prof Lau recalled that the student had been admitted because of his notable passion for learning. It was also hoped that his indomitable spirit would inspire other students as well. It is not that she has given the student a chance; rather, this student has given Lingnanians an invaluable experience to witness how one could thrive in face of adversity. He completed his master's degree afterwards but encountered difficulties in finding employment. Prof Lau encouraged him to write down his thoughts and feelings for publication. After the publication of his book, he donated all his royalties to the Department of Chinese and set up a scholarship as a token of his gratitude to his alma mater. His accomplishments not only epitomized his efforts but also testify the importance of education to whole-person development and the liberal arts ethos of "inspiring lives with lives".

Naturally, not every student can deal with adversity with perseverance and an indefatigable spirit. Perhaps as a mother with teaching experience in secondary school, Prof Lau has a better understanding of the difficulties and anxiety students often face. She admitted that she could not look after every student but hoped that she could try her best to help those in need. Despite her heavy workload in teaching, research and administration, she is most willing to listen to the inner thoughts of her students and will take the initiative to reach out to them. This has brought her many sweet rewards and appreciation from students, such as postcards and knickknacks picked up during their travels. She taught the tale *Liu Yi Chuan Shu* in her classical fiction class. Once, a student sent her photos of the scenery and the statues of the protagonists Liu Yi and Dragon Princess during a tour of the Dongting Lake as supplementary materials for her classes. Such gifts may be inexpensive, but they mean a lot to her. They speak volumes about the close and affectionate bonding between teachers and students built on Lingnan's liberal arts ethos. Prof Lau treasures each and every one of these relationships very much.

Looking back at her years of teaching at Lingnan, Prof Lau is grateful for her good fortune. In her, we see not only a caring, dedicated and versatile scholar but also a teacher with an insatiable desire to learn, share and nurture. As the saying goes, both teachers and students benefit from each other in the teaching and learning process. This is how it should be.